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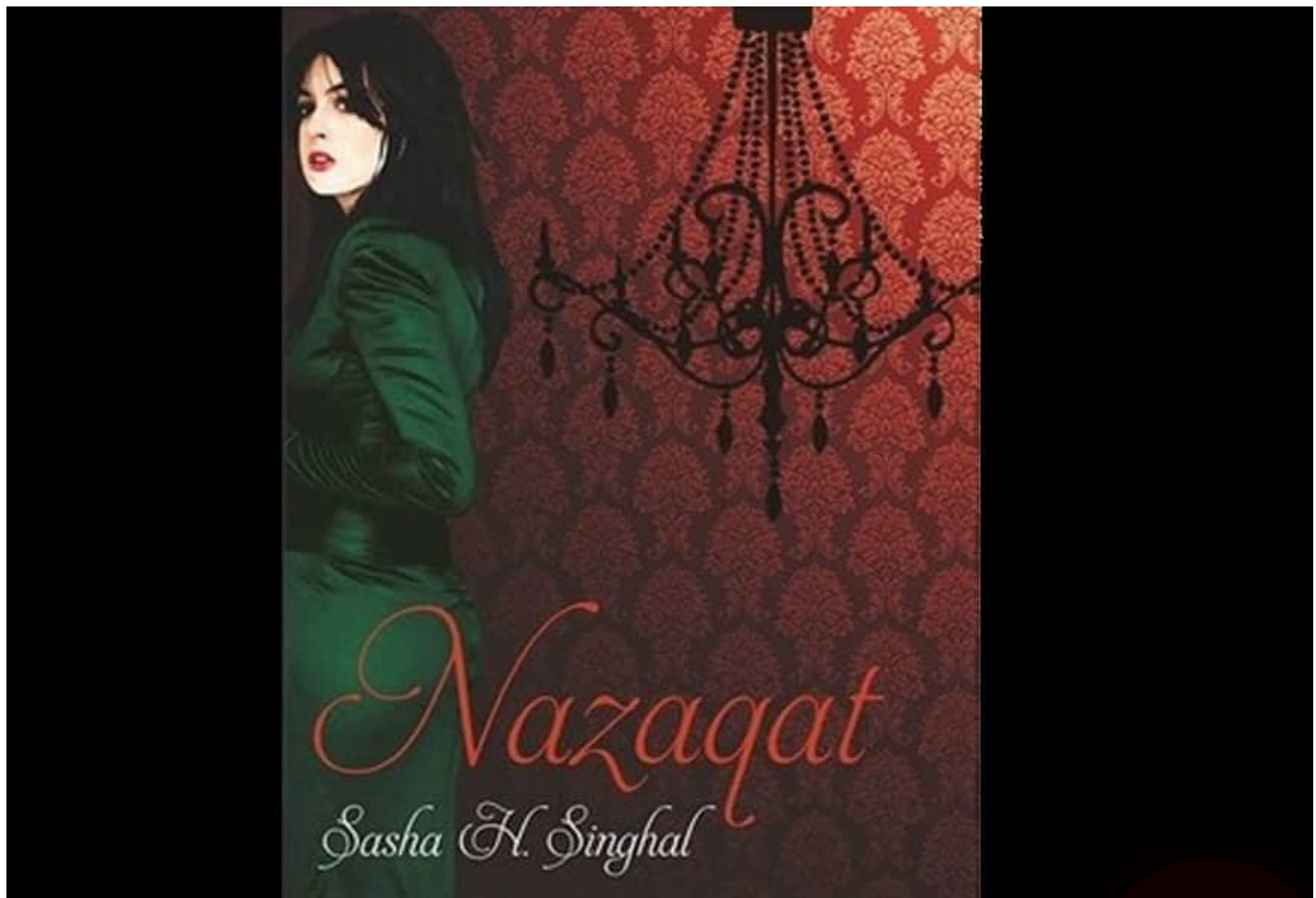
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'Nazaqat' book review: Worth making a movie about



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By Aparna Mudi

A woman oriented novel can go wrong in many ways. Many a times the author deviates and starts to



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focus on the cliched expectations of a novel rather than the character and the plot itself. With 'Nazaqat' that mistake is avoided well by writer Sasha H Singhal. A drama thriller based on the life of the fictional Nazaqat, the book is a rather good read, with certain flaws.

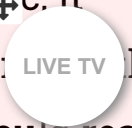
The story is moviesque, with the plot moving fast and more often than not, keeps the reader on the edge. Naazani Singh Shekhawat, a girl growing up in a small town discovers the world sans any guidance. She forms her own opinions and grown up to her own thought. She comes to the city and turns to prostitution and starts being called Nazaqat. Interestingly Singhal steers clear of any clichés here too. He makes sure that it is not a sob story that kick starts the novel.

The story then twists to how Naazani has grown from being a small time escort to a sensational socialite. She opens her own restaurant in partnership with an old friend. But the main protagonist is caught unawares when she is blamed of murder; during a reunion with her old friends. To sort the entire fiasco she calls in a writer Matthew, who is an old acquaintance to pen down her biography.

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The writer makes every attempt to make this story as interesting as he can. He brings in many elements of thrill. One of the greatest plusses that this book has is the fact that the story is not linear. It moves to and fro from the present to the past, making sure that not everything is revealed at once. Starting from childhood to adulthood, to Naazani's character stepping into prostitution, Singhal makes the writer wait the events out. He has also managed to keep the aura of a strong character like Nazaqat as mystical as possible. He has made her a person who brings down many a egoistical fool, but the pride is not without reason. She seems to be a woman of substance.

There are flaws in the book. The one big qualm I have with a book with so much expectations is that there could have been a much better editing, as with 'Grammar Nazis', the errors stand out like sore thumbs. The writing is crisp, but the end seems hurried – it could have made a more lyrical finish to keep the high that Singhal maintains throughout the book.

Even though the story can get a little didactic, it does touch on a lot of social issues. The dra  he story is high, and that is one reason one should read the book. Good women oriented thrillers are difficult

to come by, and 'Nazaqat' is one of the few that has the capability to make the mark.

If marketed well and presented to the write people, this book can be turned into a movie – and any of the superstars would love to play a central strong character role like Naazareen.

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